

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 4825

AMCONSUL PORT SAID SENDS.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, EG

SUBJECT: MILITARY EXERCISE PORT SAID

1. UNITS OF THE EGYPTIAN SECOND ARMY CONDUCTED A TRAINING EXERCISE IN PORT SAID SATURDAY, APRIL 3, INVOLVING BOTH ARMORED AND GROUND FORCES. MUCH OF THE EXERCISE'S STAGING TOOK PLACE IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE CONSULATE.

2. SOVIET MAKE TANKS AND MOTORIZED HOWITZERS AS WELL AS GROUND FORCES PARTICIPATED IN AN EXERCISE WHICH APPEARED TO BE AIMED AT REPELLING A BEACH LANDING. TO THE UNSOPHISTICATED EYE, THE ARMORED UNITS SEEMED TO BE IN NEED OF MAINTENANCE AND A GREAT DEAL OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE JURY-RIGGED EQUIPMENT WAS IN EVIDENCE ON THE TANKS. THE MOTORIZED HOWITZERS, CONVERSELY, APPEARED TO BE WELL MAINTAINED.

3. DURING THIS EXERCISE EACH TANK WAS SUPPORTED BY A CONTINGENT OF NINE SOLDIERS, FIVE ARMED WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, TWO MANNING A LIGHT MACHINE GUN, ONE CARRYING A ROCKET LAUNCHER, AND ONE AN AMMUNITION
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CARRIER. THE MOTORIZED HOWITZERS WERE DEPLOYED

WITHOUT GROUND SUPPORT AND SEPARATELY FROM THE
TANKS. THE ENTIRE EXERCISE, FROM STAGING TO
WITHDRAWAL, LASTED FROM EARLY MORNING UNTIL MID-
AFTERNOON AND WAS OBSERVED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF
COMMISSIONED AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

4. WHEN REFERRING TO THE EXERCISE, LOCAL CIVILIAN
OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BE SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSED BY THE
ACTIVITY OF THEIR MILITARY BRETHREN AND GIVE THE
IMPRESSION THAT THEY WILL RESIST FURTHER ATTEMPTS
TO USE THE CITY AS A TRAINING SITE. SURBER
EILTS

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